

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

As a member of a Standards and Practices Dept. for various corporations for over a decade, (including both network and cable companies such as NBC, CBS, FOX Family Channel, The WB and now Fox Cable Networks) I've paid particular attention to the continued consolidation of media, both over the airwaves and in print. As a private corporation, Sinclair can do what it likes. YOU, however are beholden to the good tax-paying citizens of this nation to ensure that what they transmit over public airwaves is not harmful to this free democratic land. Lies, by any side, are harmful. The people who pay to enter a theatre to see a film such as "Fahrenheit 9/11" make a conscious decision to do so. People who turn on their television sets, who receive information such as what is being transmitted in this one-sided "documentary" over the public airwaves, need to know that what they are viewing is being scrutinized by your office and that "equal time" is being given to all. Please do the right thing. We're all watching. Thank you very much.

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